

# Looking back on a special year

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Following what has become a tradition, we start the new year on the blog with a little overview of the most read articles of the last year. While usually, this list is full of surprises – I must admit that I am always very curious to see it – , this year it is less so. We already knew that Cristian van Eijk with his article on the activities of Elon Musk's company SpaceX on Mars beat all records – with roughly 120'000 views, it is the most read article ever published on *Völkerrechtsblog*.

From previous years we also knew that the most read articles are not necessarily the ones published in the same year. It was also no surprise therefore that several of the articles listed below are from previous years; some of them were furthermore already on last year's list. This is the case for the post by Carrie Menkel-Meadow on alternative dispute resolution (our No. 1 of last year), which seems to have become somewhat of a standard read. The same is true for Valentin Schatz' and Dmytro Koval's article on the maritime order in the Black Sea and the Sea of Azov and Nula Frei's article on cyber trafficking. As I have written last year, we are particularly happy about this – it shows that articles published on *Völkerrechtsblog* remain visible and relevant over time.

Finally, it is no surprise that the all dominating topic this year was the topic that keeps on affecting all of us: Corona. Many of the articles listed below in one way or another deal with international legal aspects of the pandemic. Many readers read again Robert Frau's assessment – written in 2016 in the context of the Ebola crisis – of the WHO's International Health Regulations (see No. 14 of the list). A recurring issue many readers were interested in are furthermore the human rights implications of the pandemic (see Nisha Gupta and Udaiveer Ahlawat's assessment of the lockdown measures in India and Spyridoula Katsoni's reflections of the compatibility of compulsory vaccination policies with human rights). Tobias Ackermann drew a link to international criminal law and analyzed whether Brazil's president's (non-)handling of the coronavirus pandemic constitutes a crime against humanity. And Pedro Villarreal, who writes on this topic since many years (see for example [this](#) or [this](#) post from previous years), analyzed the functioning of the legal instruments we have at hands in the global health governance system under the WHO.

But also this year, the list features some (positive) surprises. I am particularly happy that posts dealing with non-mainstream questions and topics attracted the attention of so many readers. This is the case of Michele Krech's post published in the context of our [book review symposium](#) on the book "Feminist Engagement with International Law" that we held last January or Doris Liebscher's contribution to our [symposium](#) on critical race perspectives (published already in 2018). Finally, Medha Srivastava's post on the Citizenship Amendment Act in India sheds light on a topic that has not received enough attention in media around the globe.

Last but not least, I am pleased that despite COVID-19 two posts dealing with climate change are on the list. Last April, when the world's eyes were fixed on the Corona crisis, we held a [symposium](#) on climate justice. As we wrote back then in our introduction to the symposium, despite the imminent and still ongoing health crisis, attention to the climate crisis cannot be postponed – questions as fundamental as those of climate justice will outlive the current health crisis.

In this sense, let us all hope that our attention in this new year can shift again to other important questions and topics. I wish you all the best and am already looking forward to many surprising posts in 2021!

1. Cristian van Eijk, [Sorry, Elon: Mars is not a legal vacuum – and it's not yours, either](#) (5 November 2020)
2. Brian D. Lepard, [Why customary international law matters in protecting human rights](#) (25 February 2019)
3. Nisha Gupta & Udaiveer Ahlawat, [India's battle against Covid-19: The lockdown of human rights](#) (20 April 2020)
4. Tobias Ackermann, [COVID-19 at the International Criminal Court: Brazil's health policy as a crime against humanity?](#) (14 August 2020)
5. Carrie Menkel-Meadow, [The History and Development of "A" DR](#) (alternative/appropriate dispute resolution) (1 July 2016)
6. Michele Krech, [The problem of 'sport sex'. Reflections on de-essentialising gender and globalising law](#) (9 January 2020)
7. Pedro A. Villarreal, [The 2019-2020 novel coronavirus outbreak and the importance of good faith for international law](#) (28 January 2020)
8. Raffaella Kunz, Dana Schmalz & Anna-Julia Saiger, [International law in an age of catastrophe. Introducing our climate justice symposium](#) (27 April 2020)
9. Valentin J. Schatz and Dmytro Koval, [Ukraine v. Russia: Passage through Kerch Strait and the Sea of Azov \(Part I\)](#) (10 January 2018)
10. Nula Frei, [On 'cyber trafficking' and the protection of its victims](#) (26 July 2017)
11. Doris Liebscher, [Sind Juden weiß? Wie Antidiskriminierungsrecht am Antisemitismus scheitert](#) (14 February 2018)
12. Spyridoula Katsoni, [Do compulsory vaccinations against COVID-19 violate human rights? An assessment of the measure's compatibility with the European Convention on Human Rights](#) (2 December 2020)
13. Medha Srivastava, [The complacency of constitutional courts: India's Supreme Court and the Citizenship Amendment Act](#) (12 August 2020)
14. Robert Frau, [Creating Legal Effects for the WHO's International Health Regulations \(2005\) – Which way forward?](#) (13 April 2016)
15. Nataša Nedeski, Tom Sparks & Gleider Hernández, [Judging climate change obligations: Can the World Court raise the occasion? Part I: Primary obligations to combat climate change](#) (30 April 2020)